

Information Operations in Support of Demonstrations and Shows of Force

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Shows of force and demonstrations are military operations conducted by combat forces to protect U.S. and Allied interests, give warning and pause to hostile groups, persuade neutrals, and encourage friendly groups.¹ Shows of force and demonstrations are military activities that support preventive diplomacy.² Preventive diplomacy is one of the three diplomatic-led activities of peace operations in which military activities play a supporting role.³ Military activities appropriate for shows of force and demonstrations in support of peacekeeping and peace enforcement include multi-national training exercises demonstrating coalition military capabilities, interoperability, unity of effort, and resolve.⁴ Information operations (IO) leverage the effectiveness of shows of force and demonstrations by informing targeted audiences of friendly force capabilities and intent.

The NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) conducting peace operations in the former Yugoslavia conducted a show of force and demonstration 25 March to 17 April 1998 to demonstrate SFOR's rapid reinforcement capability. The show of force exercise, dubbed Dynamic Response (DR) '98, commenced with an amphibious landing at Ploce on the Croatian coastline on 26 March 1998.⁵ The culmination exercise of DR '98 was a combined-arms live fire exercise (CALFEX) demonstration called Dynamic Strike '98, held at the Glamoc firing range in Multi-National Division-SouthWest (MND-SW). Both the show of force and its concluding demonstration were intended to show to the people of the former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and their military and political decision-makers SFOR's ability to rapidly insert additional combat forces into theater to reinforce SFOR.

As SFOR reduces its on-the-ground force structure in Bosnia, the requirement for a reliable rapid response capability takes increasing importance. SFOR needed to retain the capability of responding to a renewal of hostilities or increased tensions in order to maintain the peace imposed upon the former warring factions during the initial peace enforcement operations conducted in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. The creation of a European-based Strategic Reaction Force (SRF) for the Bosnia arena allowed SFOR to continue on-the-ground force reductions without compromising its credibility to enforce the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Accord through lethal combat power. This force, while not based in theater, would have the mission of serving as both a deterrent to renewing hostilities and a viable reinforcement option to support one or more SFOR sectors in a period of heightened tension. The purpose of the show of force and demonstration was both to visibly demonstrate that despite reductions of on-the-ground forces, SFOR still had the capability to respond to escalation and remained committed to enforcing the peace, and to train the SRF to execute tasks associated with rapidly reinforcing a deployed peace operations force.

Information operations provide the U.S. Government the capability to influence the perceptions and decision making of the former warring factions (FWFs) and greatly improves the deterrent value of power-projection options.⁶ Political concerns dominate shows of force and demonstrations, as the objective is to dissuade adversaries from interfering with the enforcement of international law, UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), and internationally recognized peace accords.⁷ At the operational level, IO employed in conjunction with shows of force and demonstrations supports deterrence of the resumption of hostilities and reassures allies and the international community that the peace operations force remains capable of implementing the peace agreement. In peace enforcement operations, maintaining security involves demonstrations of inherent military capability and preparedness, and the overt presence of uncommitted mobile combat power in the form of a reserve.⁸

The deterrent effects of DR 98 were leveraged by incorporating IO with the lethal combat power components into a fluid exercise that was extremely successful in showing the SFOR resolve in maintaining unbroken enforcement of the Dayton Peace Accord. Used in this manner, IO can enhance the impact of informational, diplomatic, economic, and military efforts; and forestall or eliminate the need to employ forces in a combat or crisis situation.⁹ Demonstrations and shows of force, supported by effective information operations, can deter adversaries from interfering with the peace operation force or its objectives or from resuming the hostilities with the other FWFs.¹⁰ The objective is to demonstrate resolve and commitment to a peaceful resolution while underlying the readiness and ability to use force if required.¹¹

An effective show of force or demonstration must be demonstrably mission-capable and sustainable.¹² That is, the execution of the show of force or demonstration must convincingly demonstrate to the targeted audience that the peace operations force has the necessary combat power, C3, intelligence, international liaison, and ready and responsive forces required to use

military force to enforce compliance. The SFOR SRF in DR 98 included military forces from four NATO countries (Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the United States) and two NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations (Poland and Romania). The SRF could number more than 5,000 soldiers and comprises a wide range of military capabilities to include light, airborne, and mechanized infantry, as well as armor, artillery, and both fixed and rotary wing attack aircraft.¹³ Peace operations doctrine notes that armored forces and attack helicopter assets can play major roles in deterrence or function as a mobile reserve.¹⁴



Photo 1. A Landing Craft Air-Cushioned (LCAC) of the 26th MEU is guided ashore at Poje, Croatia, on 25 March 1998.
Photo by CPL Graham Spark. CPIC

The DR 98 show of force took the form of a training exercise in which the SRF practiced combat operations such as amphibious assault; air assault; fire and maneuver, and such peacekeeping tasks as manning checkpoints, patrolling, and inspecting weapons storage sites. During the exercise, the participating forces became familiar with the area of operations and command and control procedures among the participating nations of the SRF and of SFOR.¹⁵ The culmination point of the exercise was the CALFEX demonstration conducted in front of an audience of key political and military leaders of the FWFs. The message that SFOR wanted to send was that although they would lessen the military force structure in the future, they still had the capability and means to deploy a potent military force in the event of heightened tensions.



Photo 2. Polish paratroopers dismount a USMC CH-46E during Dynamic Strike, 03 April 1998.
Photo by SPC Charlie Boles. CPIC Sarajevo

The Public Affairs (PA) component of IO was the primary vehicle to inform the regional and international media covering the events. Press conferences were held by the Deputy Commander Supreme Allied Commander-Europe (SACUER) aboard the USS Wasp in the Adriatic at the commencement of the exercise, and by the SACEUR himself at the culminating CALFEX demonstration at the Glamoc firing range. The SFOR Coalition Press Information Center (CPIC) provided a steady stream of press releases before, during, and after the exercise. SPIC press kits on the exercise ensured that the regional and international media knew the SACEUR's intent. The commander's intent of the military operations must be clearly

communicated and correctly interpreted by potential adversaries.¹⁶ As open sources to foreign countries and the United States, PA channels can be used to disseminate international information.¹⁷

Dynamic Strike, the culminating CALFEX demonstration of Exercise Dynamic Response 98, featured a force-projection scenario of a multinational SRF encountering a hostile force about to attack a village situated on the Barbara Range at Glamoc. During the demonstration, the SRF responded to the hostile force with organic weapons, supported by 81-mm mortar fires; Cobra gunships from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit and Apaches from the Task Force Eagle 4th Aviation Brigade fired on "adversary" APCs. U.S. and Italian Marines conducted amphibious assault and helicopter air assault operations onto the coast. A reinforcing multinational ground force, composed of mechanized and armored forces, linked up with the amphibious and air assault forces. During the demonstration, the SRF maintained a blistering rate and volume of fire from 120-mm tank guns, automatic weapons and cannon fire, TOW and MILAN missiles, and mortar and artillery fire. In the last wave of the attack, attack helicopters eliminated remaining targets, while NATO air assets, including Harriers from the USS Wasp, Jaguars, and F16s, were ready to intervene and deliver 2,000-pound bombs on target if necessary.¹⁸

Gen. Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR), at a press conference following the live-fire demonstration, declared "Maintaining a strategic reserve force outside the region that is ready to respond quickly to any crisis, and help restore stability, is important to SFOR's ability to maintain peace throughout the region."¹⁹ He further added, "An action is worth a thousand words. By demonstrating its capabilities, SFOR nations have made a very powerful judgement, peace will be kept, the Dayton Peace Agreement implemented, and Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a normal country in Europe."²⁰



Photo 3. The media were given full access to events during the exercise.
Photo by MAJ Deschard. CPIC Sarajevo

The opening amphibious landing and air assault operations of Exercise Dynamic Response attracted large press attention from local, regional, and international media.²¹ That interest was cultivated with a well-organized and rehearsed "Media Day" on 24 March at the commencement of the exercise.²² That media interest was subsequently maintained throughout the exercise by ensuring media awareness of and access to exercise events and through the use of press releases given to the and posted on the Internet.²³ The SFOR CPIC, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) Public Information Office, the American Forces Press Service, and the United States European Command (US EUCOM) all provided press releases documenting the preparation and execution of the show of force and its culminating firepower demonstration.



Photo 4. Officers of the Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) at Glamoc range during Dynamic Strike.
Photo by David Taylor. SFOR Informer

The show of force exercise and the culminating CALFEX demonstration and the attendant local, national, and international media coverage had a profound impact on the FWF political and military leadership. According to unit after-action reviews (AARs) and interviews conducted by the SFOR Public Information Office with prominent FWF military and political leaders, those FWF leaders in attendance, and those watching the event through the media, received the intended message loud and clear.

Endnotes:

1. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-20, *Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 5 December 1990), p. 1-11.
2. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-23, *Peace Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 30 December 1994), p. 2.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 111.
4. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-7, *Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 31 May 1995), p. 8-9.
5. SFOR Coalition Press Information Center, Press Release "Exercise Dynamic Response 98 -- Images From Deployment," Sarajevo, 26 March 1998, downloaded from: <http://www.nato.int/sfor/dyn-resp/p980326n.htm>
6. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-6, *Information Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 27 August 1996), p. 2-2.
7. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-20**, op. cit., p. 5-4.
8. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-23**, op. cit., p. 17.
9. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, **Joint Publication 3-13, *Joint Doctrine for Information Operations***, Preliminary Coordination Draft, 28 January 1998, pp. I-2 and I-3.
10. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-23**, op. cit., p. 17.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
12. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-20**, op. cit., p. 5-4.
13. Coalition Press Information Center, Sarajevo, 23 March 1998, Press Release "Operation Joint Guard, Exercise Dynamic Response 98," downloaded from <http://www.nato.int/sfor/dyn-resp/dyn-resp.htm>
14. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-23**, op. cit., p. 40.
15. Linda D. Kozaryn, American Forces Press Service, Department of Defense, Press Release 98167, "NATO Strategic Reserve to Train in Bosnia," American Forces Press Service downloaded from: <http://www.dtic.mil/afps/news/9803243.htm>
16. Air Command and Staff College Research Project 95-053, "Planning and Executing Conflict Termination," Chapter 3, Case Study Analysis (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: ACSC, 1995), p. 9.
17. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, **Joint Publication 3-53, *Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 10 July 1996), p. vi.
18. 2LT David Arnold, "Dynamic Strike 98 Opens Fire," Coalition Press Information Center, Sarajevo, 03 April 1998, downloaded from: <http://www.nato.int/sfor/dyn-resp/p980403a.htm>

19. Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, News Release 98-09-02, "INITIAL EXERCISE PRESS RELEASE Exercise Dynamic Response 98," 09 February 1998, downloaded from: <http://www.shape.nato.int/Press/980902.htm>
 20. 2LT David Arnold, op. cit.
 21. Coalition Press Information Center, Sarajevo, 25 March 1998, Press Release "Strategic Reserve Force Arrives For Exercise Dynamic Response 98," downloaded from: <http://www.nato.int/sfor/dyn-resp/p980325a.htm>
 22. Coalition Press Information Center, Sarajevo, 24 March 1998, Press Release "Operation Joint Guard, Exercise Dynamic Response 98 -- Media Day," downloaded from <http://www.nato.int/sfor/dyn-resp/p980324a.htm>
 23. SFOR CPIC press releases included instructions to journalists on coordination of air and ground transportation (provided by SFOR) to the exercise events and offered assistance to journalists wanting to cover the scheduled events. The SFOR CPIC press kit issued in advance of the exercise laid out the entire exercise plans for journalists to plan their coverage.
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